

# The Destruction of Jerusalem

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Jeremiah 29: 7.



“And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the Lord for it; for in its peace you will have peace.”  
Jeremiah 29: 7.



# I. Introduction

Children of God are always peaceful citizens, praying without ceasing. They know that the best answer for all challenges is to put all things in God's hand.





“God invites us to pray for our country. And He requests that those who leave their birthplace continue to pray for people, wherever they live. He wants His children to intercede in favor of all and especially of political leaders. A child of God is a blessing for his city, province and country.”  
(DS)



“Which did you last do  
— criticize or pray?  
God did not call you  
to criticize, He called  
you to pray. If you are  
not praying, you are  
disobedient.”  
Derek Prince



“The disciples of Christ must be praying people; all, without distinction of nation, sect, rank, or party. Our duty as Christians, is summed up in two words: godliness, that is, the right worshipping of God; and honesty, that is, good conduct toward all men. These must go together: we are not truly honest, if we are not godly, and do not render to God his due; and we are not truly godly, if not honest. What is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, we should abound in.”  
Matthew Henry





“Interceding for those in authority is not an option. It is a biblical command that we are to obey. (1 Timothy 2:1-2, KJV). Understand that the Apostle Paul is writing this instruction to his protégé Timothy at a time when the vile emperor Nero was at the helm of the vast Roman Empire. Christians were viciously persecuted, clothed in wild animal skins and put in the arena before hungry lions, even covered red in pitch and used as human lanterns to light the streets of Rome. Nevertheless, the aged apostle, who would soon be martyred during Nero’s reign of terror, instructs Timothy to make prayer for the rulers of his day—including the deranged Nero—a personal priority.

There should be a sense of urgency in our prayer life, an understanding that we “do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12). The prince of darkness is grimly and powerfully at work in world affairs, and prayer is a great battlefield especially as we pray for those in leadership.” Franklin Graham

“Strong allegiance to a person's own country is a good and important virtue, but as Christian patriots we fulfill our proper responsibility in both roles when we are rooted in the knowledge that the cross of Jesus Christ stands high above the flag of every nation, including our own. From that stance we can challenge every earthly authority to remember that they serve at the pleasure of a God who is just and merciful and requires the same of them. In this way we render our greatest service to both God and country.”

BY VERNON S. BROYLES III





“In His sovereignty  
God has placed us in  
our land. We are to  
pray for it, make it as  
good as it can be –  
also for the glory of  
God. There is a place  
for primary love for  
God and secondary  
love for country.”  
John Benson Sloan



“Although all governing authorities have been instituted by God, they have been tainted with human sin, and as such do not always conform to the rule of God. Clearly, Hitler’s regime, which produced massive death and destruction, was not an authority in God’s service (13:5). If a government or authority ceases to be a force for good and order, but instead becomes an instrument of evil and death, it is no longer a Christian’s duty to submit and obey that authority (cf. Acts 5:29).”  
Matthew G. Neufeld





# II. Context





The chapter 29 of the prophet Jeremiah confirms that false prophets in Babylon contested the prophetic ministry of Jeremiah. Jeremiah himself sent regularly the messages of encouragement to the people of God to stay strong for a long period of time (70 years) and to pray for the well-being of Babylon. However, the false prophets proclaimed another scenario: a prompt return from Babylon. The exiled people of God adopted the message of the false prophets, telling Jeremiah: "The LORD has raised up prophets for us in Babylon" (29: 15). This is why Jeremiah sent again the message of God for His people, reminding them that God is in control of their future. God's plan for them is to stay in Babylon for 70 years. Those who decided to stay in Jerusalem will face the war, the famine, and the sicknesses. Obviously, listening to God's word is always meaningful.

## The structure of Jeremiah 29

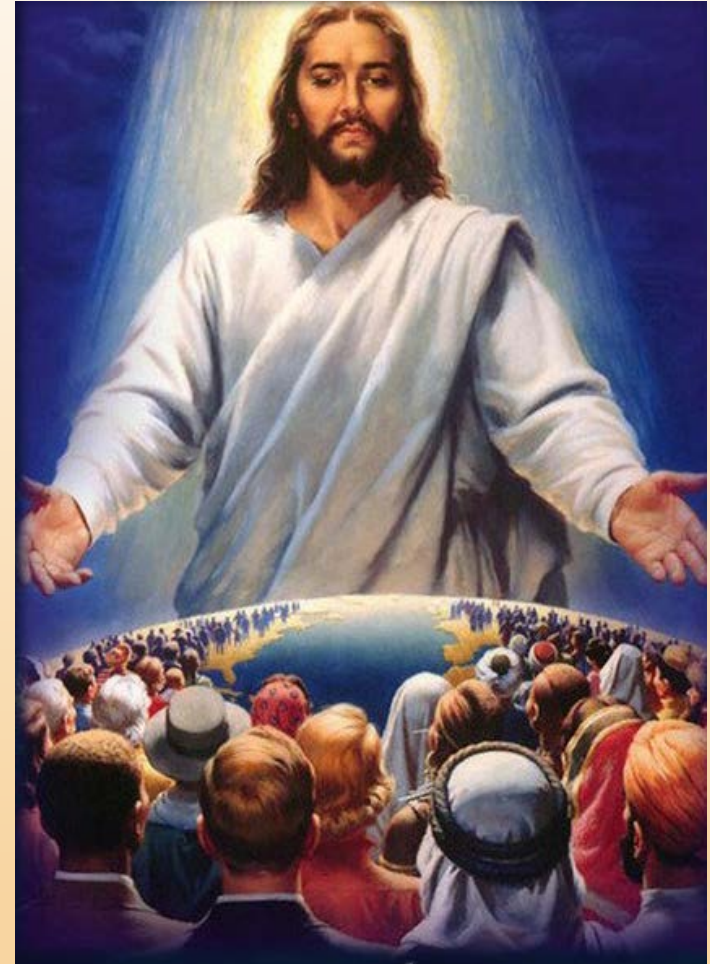
<b>A</b>	1 - 4	A letter of Jeremiah from Jerusalem to His people in Babylon
<b>B</b>	5 - 7	Message to people in Babylon regarding Babylon
<b>C</b>	8 - 9	Warning regarding false prophets
<b>D</b>	10	After 70 years I will bring you back to Jerusalem
<b>E</b>	11 - 14	Encounter of God with His people
<b>D'</b>	15 - 19	I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence
<b>C'</b>	20 - 23	Prophecy against false prophets
<b>A'</b>	24 - 28	Letters from false prophets from Babylon to Jerusalem
<b>B'</b>	29 - 32	Message to people in Babylon regarding a false prophet

# The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah: Structure

A	Ch. 1	Prologue: Vocation of Jeremiah and prediction about Babylon
B	Ch. 2 - 10	Prophecies regarding Judah
C	Ch. 11 - 20	Confessions of Jeremiah
D	Ch. 21 - 29	Nebuchadnezzar punishing the king Zedekiah and Jerusalem
E	Ch. 30 - 33	The New Covenant and the new Consolation
D'	Ch. 34 - 35	Sin of the king Zedekiah
C'	Ch. 36 - 45	Suffering of Jeremiah
B'	Ch. 46 - 51	Prophecies regarding the Nations
A	Ch. 52	Epilogue: Fall of Jerusalem and fulfillment of the prophecy about Babylon



III. God is always looking to create the best environment for His children. Sometimes, it means that we will face some challenging situations.



1. Those who put God in the first place consider the pursuit of peace as an essential aspect of their ministry.

*"And seek the peace"*

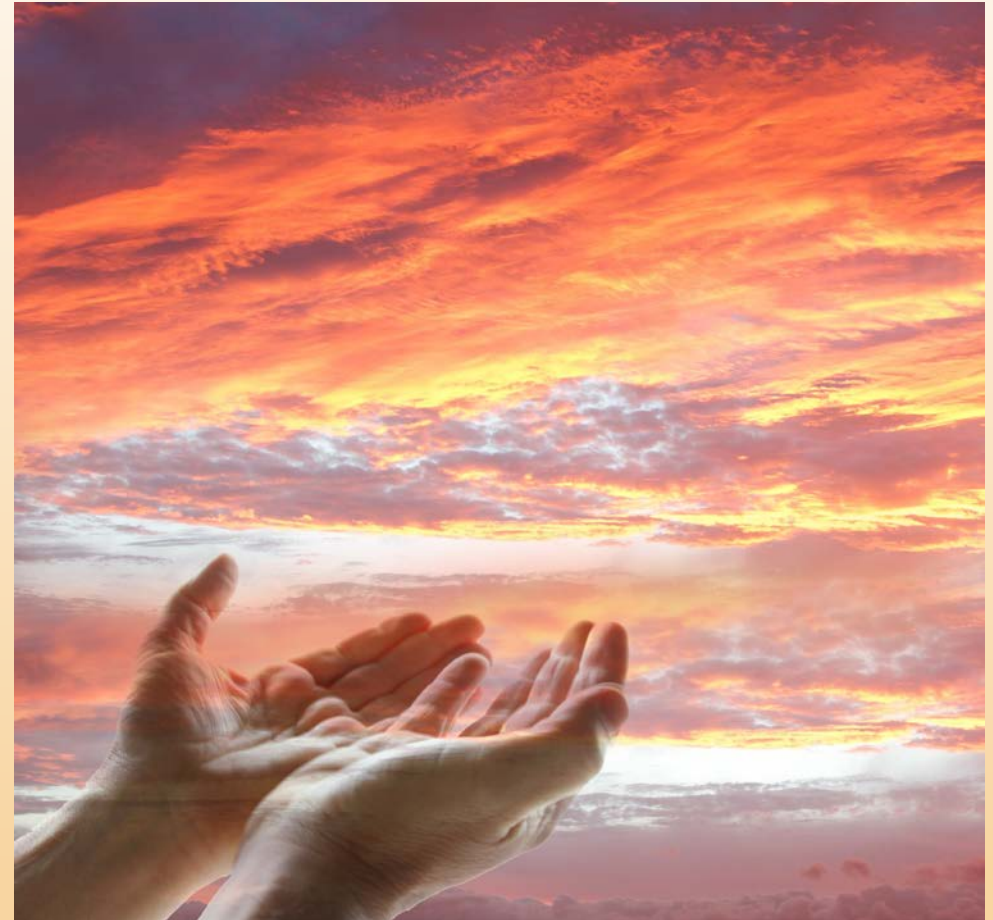


“The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace. True wisdom is never argumentative or quarrelsome. It does not strive. It maintains harmonious relationships with everyone, as far as possible. It is impossible to quarrel with a man who is filled with Divine wisdom, for such a man is a peaceable man.”  
Zac Poonen





“Peace comes when there is no cloud between us and God. Peace is the consequence of forgiveness, God’s removal of that which obscures His face and so breaks union with Him.”  
Charles H. Brent



“To put all things in God’s hands through prayer, including our neighborhood, our city, and our country is the best attitude possible. We depend on God for all things. Not because we are lost in this world, but because this world is lost and in this chaotic environment there is only one place of true peace and happiness. With God we have everything. And this is what we share with others through our prayer.”  
(DS)



“When people are praying for peace, the cause of peace is being strengthened by their very act of prayer, for they are themselves becoming immersed in the spirit of peace.”

John Macquarrie





2. The captivity is not able to change the focus and the priority of those who want to honor God's will. They are peacemakers and 'they shall be called sons of God'.

"the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive"



"Intercession is truly universal work for the Christian. No place is closed to intercessory prayer. No continent - no nation - no organization - no city - no office. There is no power on earth that can keep intercession out."

Richard Halverson



“Naaman, the general of a mighty army, was blessed when a young girl was brought to his home as a captive from the land of Israel. In the same way the Babylonians had to feel blessed with the praying attitude of their Jewish servants. This was the message of God through Jeremiah: pray for Babylon, pray for people in Babylon. May they know the almighty God through your intercession.”  
(DS)





“With what tender compassion did God inform His captive people of His plans for Israel! He knew that should they be persuaded by false prophets to look for a speedy deliverance, their position in Babylon would be made very difficult. Any demonstration or insurrection on their part would awaken the vigilance and severity of the Chaldean authorities and would lead to a further restriction of their liberties. Suffering and disaster would result. He desired them to submit quietly to their fate and make their servitude as pleasant as possible.”

Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 441.

3. Our duty is to pray for the well-being of the society and for the leaders of the country

“And pray to the Lord for it”



“The apostles [Peter and Paul] never separate the language of submission to the authority from the language of justice... These governmental leaders are supposed to praise what is good and punish what is bad (Rom. 13:3, 4; 1 Peter 2:14). Christians who are persecuted for doing what is right receive God’s approval while they are suffering unjustly in the pagan setting (1 Peter 2:18-20). Since God is the new center of attention, our sense of moral responsibility is seen in this new light, including our relationship to government and government officials. Now submission to leaders does not arise from self-interest, fear, or external pressure. Even if government leaders bring suffering on Christians, the believer experiences the approbation of God. Our new relationship to God sets us free from the rulership of the world in our lives, but brings a freedom in obedience to God. Governments and government officials are God’s servants, and the standards of right they are to administer are God’s standards. If they step away from these ideals, then they are no longer fulfilling their God-given function. At such times, we must disobey them in order to obey God (Acts 5:29).” Tom Shepherd



“True religion teaches patient submission, not sedition, even though the prince be an unbeliever. In all states of life let us not throw away the comfort we may have, because we have not all we would have. There is here a foretaste of gospel love towards enemies (Mt 5:44).”  
Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary



“Interest yourselves in the “peace” or welfare of the city, whether Babylon or any other place where ye may be in exile, and pray for its welfare.”

H. D. M. Spence, Funk & Wagnalls, Jeremiah, Pulpit Commentary, 1909



My son, now will I teach thee the way of peace and inward liberty. Be desirous to do the will of another rather than thine own. Choose always to have less rather than more. Seek always the lowest place and to be inferior to everyone. Wish always, and pray that the will of God may be wholly fulfilled in thee."  
Thomas a Kempis





4. Asking for blessing  
on others is already  
being blessed  
“For in its peace you will have  
peace.”



“Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
Where there is injury, pardon;  
Where there is doubt, faith;  
Where there is despair, hope;  
Where there is darkness, light;  
Where there is sadness, joy.  
O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
To be consoled as to console,  
To be understood as to understand,  
To be loved as to love;  
For it is in giving that we receive;  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
It is in dying to self that we are born to eternal life.”  
Francis of Assisi

“The reality is that doing good unto others actually does more good for you.”  
Richelle E. Goodrich,  
Smile Anyway





“In doing for others, a sweet satisfaction will be experienced, an inward peace which will be a sufficient reward. When actuated by a high and noble desire to do others good, they will find true happiness in a faithful discharge of life’s manifold duties. This will bring more than an earthly reward.”  
Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, vol. 2, p. 132.





# V. Conclusion



“Men cannot manufacture peace. Human plans for the purification and uplifting of individuals or of society will fail of producing peace, because they do not reach the heart. The only power that can create or perpetuate true peace is the grace of Christ. When this is implanted in the heart, it will cast out the evil passions that cause strife and dissension. “Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree;” and life’s desert “shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.” Isaiah 55:13; 35:1.  
Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages*, p. 302.

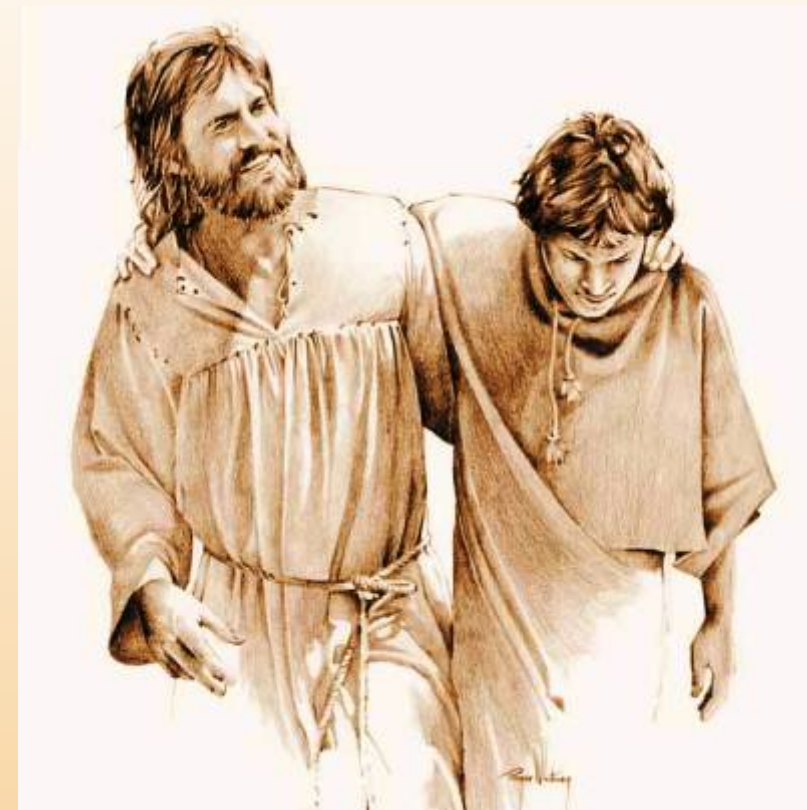


“Peace is not just the absence of a storm, but rest in the middle of the storm. As our headlines have become dominated with new dangers and so many hearts have been struggling with new anxieties and fears, we're ready for the incredible peace offered in Psalm 46. It is good news for troubled times and should be our word for every day! "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." The more troubled things are, the more present God makes Himself.”  
Ron Hutchcraft



“God seeks our real happiness. If anything lies in the way of this, He sees it must first be removed. He will thwart our purposes and disappoint our expectations and bring us through disappointments and trials to reveal to us ourselves as we are.... Sin is the cause of all our woes. If we would have true peace and happiness of mind, sin must be removed.”

Ellen G. White, *Our High Calling*, p. 81.





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